interschool memorandum

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| to: | Dr. alonzo james |
| from: | amy batista |
| subject: | Registration Rally |
| date: | June 5, 2014 |
| cc: | counseling department |
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As an advisor to mostly freshmen, I find the registration time of year to be frustrating even though my job is said to be easiest because freshmen generally do not have many restrictions due to failed classes or requirements. However, with courses changing names and the fact that we still do not have solidified hard copies of the courses offered and their descriptions, it is very difficult to advise students on what would be best for their future. Although I have been working for the district for 2 years, I am ashamed to say that I am not fully aware of all of the options that our students have in this district. It is unclear which courses they will be allowed to take that are not on our campus. Jordan High School has a Career Academy but I had only heard about it in passing as if it were a rumor that students from Kendrick High School could take part.

Likewise, our students need to be active participants in the planning of their future. Too often we baby them, or take over, and select courses for them based off of requirements only. Students need to know what options are available and how those options may affect their future outside of high school. Our students need to be able to take ownership of their education. I think our graduation rate would go up if students truly understood what options they may be able to set themselves up for right out of high school. If studies show that students are more likely to learn about a topic if they are engaged, then why aren't we engaging them in the choices that they are making for their future? Students would be more likely to watch a demonstration or video than read a paragraph explaining the courses.

This is exactly what I am proposing. The “Registration Rally” would be an assembly at the beginning of second semester describing the vocational and CTAE courses offered through Muscogee County that are available to students at Kendrick High School. The assembly could take place in the auditorium at our school. Each course or program could be represented via demonstrations, videos, audio, a representative, or a presentation. Yes, this would require some work by the teachers or program coordinators but it is in the best interest of our students. This assembly would take place prior to students preparing to fill out registration forms during their advisement. Freshman and sophomore students are the target but juniors would be invited as well. During this assembly would be a great time to have the seniors and their sponsors finish up any loose ends as far as final dues and fundraising before they begin graduation practice in the next few months. According to the Muscogee County School District website, we could obtain a guest speaker from Career Connections which is provided through the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. A speaker to open the assembly would be a great additional tool in encouraging students to make good choices along with behavior and how it impacts their future work habits. This will help students see the connection between the expectations at work and school.

The best way to implement this would be to have two separate assemblies in which a speaker opens each session. One in the morning with freshman only while the seniors have their meeting about final dues and fundraisers in another part of the school. The sophomores and juniors would attend the same assembly but it would be held in the afternoon. I do not believe that we have the space to have everyone involved at the same time and separating the rally into 2 assemblies will cut down on the possibility of behavior issues.

The “Registration Rally” can be done with very little monetary cost. It would cost money to run the air conditioner in the auditorium all day but it would only be one day. The assembly would obviously “cost” a day of instruction, so my suggestion would be to attempt to schedule the assembly the Friday before Spring Break. This would be great timing because it is not too early in the semester to start talking about registration and students will be anxious to go on break so they will be less engaged in the usual academics on that particular day anyway. The cost of the speaker would have to be investigated further upon approval. I also have suggestions for the teachers and/or program coordinators that would need to compile some form of presentation for the assembly if my proposal is accepted.

As a result of the “Registration Rally”, there would be many benefits. The faculty as a whole would not have to deal with as many schedule changes at the beginning of the year and we would all be more educated on the different courses offered at KHS. The rally would better prepare all students to make informed decisions about their life whether it prepare them for registering for classes in college, or help them decide what to include in a resume or discuss in an interview for a job. The students will take more ownership which will increase their confidence. As stated earlier, I think these things could also lead to a higher graduation rate and a lower dropout rate.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. I hope you will deem this as a tool in returning Kendrick High School back to greatness. At your convenience, please contact me so that we may further discuss the implementation of the “Registration Rally”.